



# ***NEWS RELEASE***

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**Contact:** Nancy Singer (202) 205-6740

**Internet Address:** [www.sba.gov/news/](http://www.sba.gov/news/)

## ***CALIFORNIA ENTREPRENEUR IS NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR***

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### ***Texas and Pennsylvania Winners Are Runners-Up***

**WASHINGTON** - A Costa Mesa, California, electronics manufacturer is the National Small Business Person of the Year. Aída Alvarez, Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), today named **David J. Cline, president and CEO of Balboa Instruments, Inc.** the winner of the 37<sup>th</sup> annual entrepreneurial award.

Mr. Cline was selected from a field of 53 state small business persons of the year winners representing the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Guam. His firm is a leader in the development and manufacturing of electronic control systems for the portable spa industry.

**“David Cline is a true example of the success that can be achieved through innovation and entrepreneurship,”** said Administrator Alvarez. **“Through perseverance and hard work, he now runs a \$37 million business that employs 253 people.**

**“It’s the success of people like David and all the business persons of the year that makes me proud of the work that SBA does to help entrepreneurs.”**

The **first runner-up** in the national competition is **Barbara Miller, president of Miller Paper Company**, located in Amarillo, Texas, a producer of paper and other products.

The **second runners-up** are **James A. DelGrosso, president** and **Joseph F. DelGrosso, vice president of operations, DelGrosso Foods, Inc.**, in Tipton Pennsylvania, a maker of commercial food products.

The national entrepreneur awards are a highlight of SBA’s National Small Business Week celebration, May 23-25. National Small Business Week, now in its 37<sup>th</sup> year, honors the contributions of the nation’s small business owners.

Winners are selected on their record of stability, growth in employment and sales, financial condition, innovation, response to adversity and community service.

Involvement with SBA is *not* a selection criteria, though over two-thirds of the winners received financial or management assistance from SBA at some point.

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Mr. Cline acquired Balboa Instruments Inc., in 1980, a year after the firm was founded as an electronic and development firm with production capability. Expanding on the technical base, Balboa Instruments undertook a series of product development programs that would result in expansion and diversification. Under Mr. Cline's leadership, Balboa continues to produce and patent new technology products.

The company places a great value on its employees and rewards them accordingly. Twenty percent of the company's pre-tax profit is used as a bonus allocation to employees. Mr. Cline has overcome adversity in the business world. He has developed revolutionary products, sophisticated manufacturing processes, and exemplary customer relations methods.

First runner-up Barbara Miller established Miller Paper Company in 1995 after more than 30 years in the paper industry, working her way up from an entry-level administrative position to company president. The company offers more than 1,500 paper products, ranging from office supplies to janitorial equipment and quality gift-wrap. Miller Paper Company has been growing so fast it has doubled employment since it started.

The company's success was recognized by *Entrepreneur* magazine and Dun & Bradstreet. Ms. Miller has been active in many women's associations, especially the Amarillo's Women's Network and Amarillo Executive Women. In 1997, she became a member of the Governor's Commission for Women in Texas.

DelGrosso Foods Inc., started as a "kitchen operation" based on an Italian immigrant's recipe for spaghetti sauce. Under the leadership of second runners-up James and Joseph DelGrosso, the company has grown into a modern operation, manufacturing over 18 million jars of spaghetti and pizza sauce annually for nationwide distribution, along with other commercial food products. The company has had five major expansions since it began in the 1940s with 1,000 square feet of working space, four 10-gallon pots, a stove, and a hand-operated can sealer. The company is known for its generosity throughout central Pennsylvania.

In addition to the Small Business Persons of the Year, SBA also recognized **Ralph Stonebraker, the chapter chair of Lake of the Ozarks SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executive) Chapter** in Camdenton, Missouri. The Lake of the Ozarks Chapter was designated as **Chapter of the Year**. Mr. Stonebraker has been a SCORE volunteer since 1989.

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*For more information on National Small Business Week and a complete list of award winners, visit the SBA's Small Business Week Web site at <http://smallbusinesssuccess.sba.gov/>.*

*Additional information about SBA programs and services is available at SBA's Web site: <http://www.sba.gov/>. Or call the SBA Answer Desk at 1-800-U-ASK-SBA.*

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